

REMARKS

The Office Action dated March 25, 2003 has been reviewed, and the comments of the U.S. Patent Office have been considered. Claims 2 and 16-24 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 1 and 11 have been amended, and claims 25-30 have been added. Thus, claims 1, 3-15 and 25-30 are currently pending and are respectfully submitted for reconsideration by the Examiner.

Before turning to the examiner's rejection, a quick overview of the present invention will be provided. The present invention provides a pre-programmed controller comprising one or more device drivers allowing for flexible configuration of one or more devices in a network. The controller of the present invention is provided with selectable settings for controlling the operating modes of devices that are operatively connected to the controller.

Turning now to the examiner's office action, Claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,786,993 to Frutiger et al., hereinafter "Frutiger". Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 has been amended to make it clear that what is being claimed is a controller comprising a device driver, wherein the driver comprises a first selector for selecting a plurality of first output signals from a plurality of input signals, a second selector for selecting at least one second output signal from the first output signals, and a third selector for selecting an operating mode of the end device from a plurality of predefined operating modes based on the second output signal. The fundamental difference between the present invention and Frutiger is that the present invention is implemented in a pre-programmed controller, allowing flexible configuration, as opposed to a field-programmed sequence, or a fixed sequence, as disclosed by Frutiger. Applicant respectfully submits that Frutiger does not suggest or disclose a device driver provided in a controller which comprises a plurality of input selectors, at least one intermediate selector and an output selector. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 1 because Frutiger does not teach or suggest features of the claimed invention as a whole as recited in claim 1. Claims 3-15, 25 and 26 depend ultimately from allowable claim 1, and are therefore also allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1, as well as for reciting additional features. Accordingly, claims 3-15, 25 and 26 are also in condition for allowance.

Claim 11 has been amended to make it clear that what is being claimed is a method of selectively controlling a end device in a control network using a device driver. Claim 11 can be distinguished from Frutiger in that Frutiger fails to suggest or disclose a method of using a controller provided with a device driver for controlling end devices in a control network. Thus, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 11 because Frutiger does not teach or suggest features of the claimed invention as a whole as recited in claim 11. Claims 12-15 depend ultimately from allowable claim 11, and are therefore also allowable for at least the reasons of claim 11, as well as for reciting additional features. Accordingly, claims 12-15 are also in condition for allowance.

Claims 27-30 have been added to clearly recite a network device controller comprised of a plurality of device drivers for controlling devices on a network. The Frutiger reference cited by the examiner fails to disclose a network device controller comprising a plurality of device drivers for controlling network devices, wherein the drivers comprise one or more selectors for selecting a plurality of first output signals from a plurality of first input signals, one or more selectors for selecting at least one second output signal from said first output signals and one or more selectors for selecting an operating mode of the end device from a plurality of predefined operating modes base on said second output signal. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully submits new claims 27-30 are in condition for allowance.

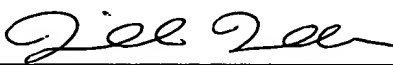
CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance and an early notification of such is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this reply, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite the prosecution.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0310. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,
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